Reports on His Homes Rile Nixon

San Clemente

The White House said yesterday President Nixon is appalled by what he regards as malicious reports that suggest wrongdoing was involved in the purchase of his oceanside estate here.

Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said Mr. Nixon's reaction was one of disbelief when he read a report yesterday in the Los Angeles Times, which reported that special Watergate [illegible] for Archibald Cox has begun a preliminary inquiry into the purchase and improvement of presidential homes here and at Key Biscayne, Fla.

(In Los Angeles, Frank Haven, managing editor of the Times, pointed out that the Times did not originate the story but accurately reported information given to Times reporters by a source familiar with the inquiry.)

The reporters independently confirmed that Cox's office had some information on the Nixon properties from White House and the General Services Administration, Haven said.

The Times reported investigators, according to the source, particularly wanted to know if any Republican campaign funds or money from unions or corporations helped to finance the purchase of the San Clemente villa.

Asked about the report, Ziegler first referred newsmen to a statement by Cox's office that no consideration had been given at this point to launching a formal investigation of Mr. Nixon's real estate activities.

'UNTRUE'

Ziegler said statements suggesting the use of campaign funds or of any improprieties were malicious, unfounded and scurrilous in [illegible] personally [illegible] man reported "the President is appalled" by what Ziegler described as a malicious and persistent effort to suggest wrongdoing.

Asked if Mr. Nixon felt some one was "out to get him," Ziegler said he had no way of determining the source of what he pictured as a rash of reports but said, "I'm not charging any individual with maliciousness."

Responding to questions, he flatly denied that any

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corporate or union funds were involved in the purchase of the San Clemente property and insisted that the White House has given an "accurate, precise and factual" account of the circumstances surrounding the San Clemente purchase.

Reminded that the White House has repeatedly refused to name the investment company which is reported to own the bulk of the San Clemente land, Ziegler said: "We do not have the responsibility for, and thus will not provide, information on another individual's financial activities."

Millionaire industrialist Robert H. Abplanalp, a Nixon friend, has been identified as head of the investment company.

TAXED

Ziegler also was asked about a report in yesterday's Orange County Register at Santa Ana which said Mr. Nixon's San Clemente home had been undertaxed by at least $35,000 and perhaps as much as $[illegible] because of a low assessment that, the newspaper reported, is being investigated by the State Board of Equalization, which monitors assessment practices.

The press secretary said the article left the suggestion that Mr. Nixon or someone at the White House had intervened to obtain a low assessment. He went on:

"We have absolutely nothing to do with tax assessments . . . the tax assessors should assess. That's their job."

The Register quoted Orange County assessor Jack Vallerga as saying the current value placed on Mr Nixon's property is $1.37 million. Mr. Nixon paid $1.5 million for the property in 1969 and the General Services Administration reported on June 21 spending $703,367 for improvements, most of them attributed to security considerations.

GIFT

The Register also noted that since Mr. Nixon purchased the estate, a six-hole golf course has been installed as a gift to the President.

The Times said Mr. Nixon's property transactions had attracted the attention of Cox's staff because of White House reluctance to disclose all details and because the transaction was handled by attorney Herbert W. Kalmbach, who raised money for the Watergate defendants.

A reporter told Ziegler the White House has offered absolutely no documentation to establish the source of the money used to purchase the California estate. He insisted the documentation consisted of a recent White House statement outlining the transaction.

Referring to suggestions of wrongdoing, Ziegler added: "There is absolutely no documentation or shred of evidence contained by anyone who makes these charges."

The spokesman also defended the federally financed improvements.

Speaking of the house purchase and the improvements, Ziegler said: "We do not intend to issue any further statement on this subject."

Asked if Mr. Nixon felt there was some sort of campaign afoot to destroy him, Ziegler replied:

"I simply will let you draw your own evaluation as an observer of things that are happening in our society."

Associated Press

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